



Anesthesia. Will my pet be OK?

What is anesthesia?

General anesthesia is a state of unconsciousness resulting from the administration of one or more drugs. The goal is to create a balanced effect of hypnosis, amnesia, analgesia (pain medication), and muscle relaxation. In pets, anesthesia is required more often than in people because they will not remain still for many different procedures.

Is anesthesia safe?

We take a number of measures to ensure your pet is as safe as possible. We assess your pet's risk status prior to using anesthetic drugs and to provide the best conditions for a comfortable and speedy recovery.

- Pre-anesthetic physical exam, hematology and blood chemistry (blood tests)
- Balanced anesthesia and pain management using the same medications as in a human hospital
- Hands-on monitoring by trained Licensed Veterinary Technicians
- State-of-the-art electronic monitoring
- Temperature management during anesthesia
- IV Fluid therapy
- Monitored recovery and post-operative care

More information about anesthesia:

What is the Risk?

To evaluate the risk associated with an anesthetic case, the patient's physical condition must be properly assessed. Risk is determined after looking at medical history, physical condition and age. Our goal is to safely minimize the amount of time your pet is anesthetized and carefully manage anesthesia depth during the procedure. We monitor vital functions like heart rate, respiration, blood pressure, temperature and blood oxygen levels carefully to keep your pet safe and comfortable.

Pre-anesthetic examination, hematology and blood chemistry

Whether your pet is young or old, a pre-anesthetic physical exam will be performed. *We strongly recommend* certain blood tests to further assess your pet's health as completely as possible. This may help uncover any previously undiagnosed health problems and allows us to better customize medication used before, during and after the procedure.

Balanced anesthesia/pain management

To reduce the amount of anesthesia we use, we use analgesic (pain medication) and sedative drugs before anesthesia. This helps reduce your pet's stress and makes them more comfortable. This also helps your pet remain calm as we prepare them for the procedure. This approach allows for a reduction in the amount of

anesthetics required, making recovery much smoother. For most procedures, your pet will also receive a constant rate infusion (CRI) of IV medications during the procedure that control pain and reduce the amount of anesthesia needed to keep your pet comfortable.

Hands-on and electronic monitoring

We follow anesthetic monitoring recommendations set by the American College of Veterinary Anesthesiologists, and have invested in state-of-the-art, automated monitoring equipment specially designed for use on animals. A trained Licensed Veterinary Technician (Veterinary Nurse) will be at your pet's side, responding to feedback from the electronic monitoring system and using their hands-on clinical experience to manage your pet's anesthesia. The technician relays information to the veterinarian who is continually aware of your pet's condition.

Temperature management during anesthesia

Studies have shown that managing a patient's temperature during and after surgery greatly reduces the risk of complications. Body temperature directly affects how the body reacts to anesthetics, so we use several methods to keep your pet's temperature at the desired level, including warm water heating pads during surgery, with continual monitoring of your pet's temperature during the procedure.

IV fluid therapy

Anesthesia can cause low blood pressure. IV fluids are administered during the procedure via a venous catheter to maintain blood pressure at acceptable levels. The IV catheter is essential to provide an immediate route for administration of fluids during and after the procedure, especially in response to changes in blood pressure trends or to administer medications as needed.

Monitoring recovery and post-operative care

Your pet will be monitored during recovery, and every accommodation will be made to ensure their warmth, comfort and well-being. This includes monitoring vital signs like temperature, heart rate and respiration rate so that any adverse responses are addressed immediately.

Going home

When you pick your pet up, you will be given specific instructions as to what to expect during the recovery process at your home and the use of post-operative medications to minimize pain and discomfort. You will be called the next day to check on your pet's progress. Any questions will be relayed to the doctor, so that you are assured that your pet is getting the best care possible.